

AMES' Series of  
STANDARD AND MINOR DRAMA.

No 103.

HOW SISTER PAXEY  
GOT HER CHILD BAPTIZED,  
AN ETHIOPEAN FARCE

IN ONE ACT,

— BY —

J. S. R. SHAW,

WITH CAST OF CHARACTERS, ENTRANCES AND EXITS, RELATIVE  
POSITIONS OF THE PERFORMERS ON THE STAGE, DE-  
SCRIPTION OF COSTUME, AND THE WHOLE OF  
THE STAGE BUSINESS, AS PERFORM-  
ED AT THE PRINCIPAL AMER-  
ICAN AND ENGLISH  
THEATRES.

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HOW SISTER  
PAXEY GOT HER CHILD BAPTIZED,

AN ETHIOPEAN FARCE

IN ONE SCENE,

BY

J. S. R. Shaw, Esq.

With complete stage directions, descriptions of costumes, and entrances and exits, correctly printed from the author's manuscript.

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(1880)

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**HOW SISTER PAXEY GOT HER CHILD BAPTIZED.**

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**CHARACTERS.**

Brother Bones.....*A Colored Preacher*  
Sister Paxey—who is rather sly, and will dance and im-  
bibe a little when no one is about.....*One of his members*  
Jim Paxey.....*Sister Paxey's son.*

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**Scene—A kitchen.**

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**Costumes—To suit the characters, but a little “loud.”**

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**Properties.**—Marbles, jewsharp, one bottle labelled “whiskey”, one bottle labelled “turpentine”, tumbler, two bottles not labelled, pail of water, large rag baby, one chair.

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**Time of performance—twenty minutes.**

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## HOW SISTER PAXEY GOT HER CHILD BAPTIZED.

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SCENE.—*A kitchen with table, chairs, etc. Jim Paxey discovered sitting on the floor, playing marbles.*

*Enter Sister Paxey, L. 1 E.*

*Sister P.* O, law me! I wonder where dat eberlastin' boy ob mine hab gone. If I git a hold ob him, I'll gib him one ob dem ole Virginia lickins, sich as massa used to gib me, when I picked cotton down south. (*she sees Jim*) O, here you is, you little scamp you, git a long where I sent you. (*kicks Jim, who runs around the stage crying.*) Stop dat cryin' an' go 'long after dat preacher, before dat chile expires. I want him to baptize it. Dat beautiful creature.

*Jim.* I ain't cryin', dat am de way I laugh. I hab been to see brodder Bones, and he says he will be here immediately, if not before.

*Sister P.* Well, den stop dat laffin, I'm too ole to be laughed at. But I must fix to sustain dat preacher, to de best ob my inability.

*Jim.* Well den, while you are waiting, let's have some fun.

*Sister P.* All right, what shall we do?

*Jim.* Why, let's run a race.

*Sister P.* I can't run, I hab got de rheumatics in one ob my legs, awful bad.

*Jim.* I guess we will have to let dat go. But dat am a curious place to take de mathematics. I always thought dat people tuck dem in de head.

*Sister P.* You Jim! I didn't say the mathematics. I said the rheumatics.

*Jim.* O yes, I understand the rheumatics. O, mammy, I know what to do now.

*Sister P.* What am it?

*Jim.* Let's jump.

*Sister P.* O, but I can't jump!

*Jim.* Well, mammy, suppose we dance.

*Sister P.* O! but den you see, I can't dance, because one foot am a Mef-fidest an' de oder am a Presbyterian.

*Jim.* O, but you can try.

*Sister P.* No I can't! no sur-ree-bob, you don't ketch me a dancin', and the preacher a cumin' in at any minute. Not much Sister Paxey don't let the preacher catch her a dancin'.

*Jim.* Well, but I have some church music here.

*(pulls a jewsharp from his pocket.*

*Sister P.* Where am it?

*Jim.* (*showing jewsharp*) Here it am. I can play dat ole camp meetin'



song, dat broder Bones makes 'em all shout wid.

*Sister P.* Are you sure you can? Now Jim, I don't want to dance anything but church music, because it would be a very great sin.

*Jim.* Yes, mammy, you jest bet your ole bonnet on dat. (*aside*) I'll fool mammy once any way. I'll play her Yankee Doodle, and she'll not know the difference.

*Sister P.* (*aside*) I don't guess it would be any harm if de preacher was cum in and catch me a dancin' church music. (*to Jim*) Well, git us some familiar tune, an' I'll try to dance.

*Jim.* All right, mammy. (*takes his jewsharp and plays Yankee Doodle, they both dance until sister Paxey stumbles and falls.*)

*Sister P.* (*rising*) Are you sure dat am church music.

*Jim.* Yes, mammy, dat am broder Bones' favorite tune. Dat am de one he makes em all shout with at de camp meetin'. (*aside*) I knowed I'd fool mammy. Dat am Yankee Doodle, but mammy don't know the difference, and I'll not tell her any better, or else she'll give me a thrashin'. (*to sister P.*) Well, mammy, how d'you like dat tune?

*Sister P.* I don't know as I eber heard it afore, but it seems to suit my taste very well. (*struts around gaily.*)

*Jim.* O, mammy, you are way behind de times, now a days.

*Sister P.* How am dat, my son? splainify dat to me.

*Jim.* (*aside*) Well, of all the old fools I eber did see, mammy is de biggest. (*to sister P.*) I mean dat you don't walk like de fashionable portion ob de population do now a days. Dey go it somethin' after dis style, only dey hab got more ob a twist to it. (*trying to walk like a lady*) Some how or oder I can't git dat peculiar twist to it dat de most ob em hab got.

(*continues to walk around.*)

*Sister P.* De oder day, when I was out takin' a walk, I met one ob de fashionable young ladies, and she was a comin' down de street a meetin' an oder one of the fashionable young ladies. She had on one ob dese pull back or hitch back, what eber you call em, and she was a comin' down de street some thin' like this. (*shows how by taking up the skirt of her short dress*) O, dear, my dress won't permit me to show you exactly how she was a comin' down dat street, but maby you can comprehend. If I disremember right, she was a comin' sorter this way. (*shows how*) "O, dear, I'm so glad to see you, it is so hot to-day, I really thought I should have expired." Now when I was a gal, it was different all together. They went it sorter this way, in muddy weather. (*shows how, by taking up her dress in front, and stamping round the stage*) And they meant business too, I tell you. Dat was when I was a gal.

*Jim.* O, mammy, give me ten cents to git a bottle of soda water, I'm so dry after dat talk.

*Sister P.* O, dear, dem rheumatics am a comin' back on me agin. You Jim, go an' git dat rheumatic medicine ob mine, you will find it on de top shelf.

*Jim.* All right, dat am just as good as soda water for me, it am awful easy to take. I'll go an' see if I can find it. (*exit R.*)

*Sister P.* O, he's an obedient son, I tell you, and he's so quick. Here he's back agin.

*Enter Jim R. with two large bottles, one labeled "whiskey" the other "turpentine." He is drinking out of the whiskey bottle as he enters.*

*Jim.* Say mammy, which ob dese here bottles am your medicine in, dis one seems to taste de best. (*drinks.*)

*Sister P.* Let me see dem labels an' I can tell you which it am.

*Jim.* All right, mammy, dat am de one you want. (*hands her the turpentine bottle.—aside*) I hope it am, for dis here tastes most awful good.

(*Sister P., takes bottle and reads label, "turpentine."*)

*Sister P.* No dis am turpentine, dis ain't my medicine; dare it am, you

have it in your hand. Dat am de bottle dat my medicine am in. Gib it to me. *(points to the bottle that Jim has.)*

Jim. All right, mammy, here it am.

*(raises the bottle as if to hand it to her, but drinks.)*

Sister P. *(disappointed)* Yes, there it am, but I ain't got it yet, and ain't likely to either from the present appearances. *(getting angry)* Gib it to me, I say!

Jim. Yes, it's awful good, I got it on the top shelf. *(raises bottle again to give it to her but drinks. She reaches to take it but is disappointed. She chases Jim around the stage, but finally gives it up and stops L.)*

Sister P. *(in a threatening manner)* Gib dat here, I say.

Jim. *(R.)* Well, mammy, here's *(raises bottle and she steps up to take it)* to your health. *(he empties bottle.)*

Sister P. From de looks ob de thing it am to your own health.

Jim. O, no mammy, dat am de style now a days. Here mammy, you drink to my health the same as I did to yours. *(hands her the empty bottle.)*

Sister P. *(pleased)* All right. *(goes to drink but Jim stops her.)*

Jim. Hold on, mammy, you forgot to say, here's to my health.

Sister P. *(getting a glass)* O, so I did, Jimmy. Well, here's to your health. *(tries to pour some out.)*

Sister P. I wonder what am in de neck ob dis here bottle, dat won't let my medicine come out. *(looks down the neck of bottle)* Now I don't see anything wrong with that bottle. *(shakes it, when she finds it is empty)* No, I don't think I will drink to your health, nor to any body elses, when you didn't leave any in the bottle. But I don't care, I can git anoder bottle, I guess, about dis house an' you shan't have nary a drop neither.

Jim. All right, mammy. *(exit Sister P. R.)* I guess I can find some more medicine about dis here house some whar. *(exit L.)*

*Enter Sister P. R., with a bottle of water, drinking. Enter Jim L. with a bottle. Business adlibitum, when Jim looks off R. and sees Brother Bones.*

Jim. O, mammy, dar am dat preacher a comin' to baptize mine little brodder.

Sister P. O, dear, I wonder what on arth dat preacher am a comin' here fur any way. O, yes, I remember now, I sent you for him to baptize dat child. Well I must fix things up a little around here. *(tries to arrange the room, but cannot stand steady, and sits down)* O well, I will just sit down on dis chair, an' when Brudder Bones comes in, I'll just sit still, an' he'll not know that I've been takin' a little too much ob my medicine.

Jim. No, no! Dat won't work, because dar ain't only one chair here, an' how am you goin' to sit on dat, an' tell him to take it?

Sister P. Neber you mind, Jim, I'm used to these preachers. I'll tell him some story about it.

Jim. *(getting tipsy)* All—hic—right, mammy—hic.

*(knock R.)*

Sister P. *(sits on chair)* Come in—hic.

*Enter Brother Bones, R. I E.*

Bones. Good day? How do you do? How do you come along?

Sister P. You mean mie'n Jim, I s'pose—hic—We do as we—hic—please—hic—Now how do you—hic—do?

Bones. Tolerable well, thank you, you seem to be indulgin' in somethin' to drink.

Sister P. Brodder Bones, take a chair—hic—an' sit down—hic.

Bones. *(sees no chair)* Sister Paxey, I don't see any chair to take.

Sister P. O, seuse me, I forgot the chairs an all in the parlor—hic—here take this—hic—one, I can stand—hic. *(staggers and gives chair to Bones.)*

Bones. *(taking chair)* Thank'ee. *(goes to sit down when she is over balanced and knocks the chair from under him, they both fall.)*

Jim. *(aside)* It pears to—hic—me dat somethin's—hic—dropped.

*Bones.* (rising and dusting his pants) Well, sister Paxey, you don't seem to stand very well.

*Sister P.* I—hic—don't eh! Well, I can't—hic—help that.

*Bones.* You should not indulge in strong drink, an' den you could help it sister.

*Sister P.* I wasn't a dulgin' in it I—hic—was only takin' some medicine—hic—for my stomach.

*Jim.* Now, mammy, you—hic—said dat was—hic—for your rheumatics dat you—hic—took dat medicine.

*Sister P.* (aside to Jim) You Jim, shut up! I tole you—hic—not to say nuthin'.

*Jim.* All right, mammy—hic—but dat am what you—hic—tole me.

*Sister P.* (to Bones) I'll tell you—hic—Brudder Bones, I had the—hic—rheumatics awful bad in one ob my—hic—legs, an' I took some ob dis here medicine ob mine, but it—hic—seems to hab gone the wrong—hic—way, it hab gone up instead ob down. You had better try some ob it, it am ready relief—hic—an' it takes effect right immediately, if not—hic—before.

(offers the bottle to him—he takes it and drinks.)

*Bones.* Dat am good, I tell you, not hard to take either. But where am dat child you wanted baptized?

*Sister P.* O, I forgot all about dat child wantin'—hic—baptizin'. I'll go an' fetch it in. (Bones stops her.)

*Bones.* O no, you needn't bring it in, I can go into de oder room. Do you want it dipped, sprinkled or submerced?

*Sister P.* Well, if it's—hic—all the same to you, I would like to—hic—hab it dipped, if you can find water enough around dis place.

*Bones.* All right. I guess we can find water enough. A pail full of water would be enough to dip a small child. I say sister, gib me some more ob dat medicine, my corns am a hurtin' awfully, an' if it am good for de rheumatics, I guess it would be good for corns.

*Sister P.* O, yes, it am mighty good for the—hic—corns. (takes a drink then hands it to Bones) It will do your corns—hic—good. Try some of it.

*Bones.* I know dat will do my corns good, for I am beginnin' to feel it in my—hic—toes already. (sits bottle down beside him. Sister P. takes the bottle unobserved by him, and empties it and sits it back.)

*Sister P.* I say, Brodder Bones, what did you—hic—come here for—hic—any way?

*Bones.* Well, now, if dat don't—hic—beat de dickens. When—hic—I come here, dey say "what'd come here for?"—hic—an' when I go away dey say, "when you comin'—hic—back?" What'd I come here for, let me see. Why I come to baptize that—hic—child ob yours. (takes up the empty bottle turns it up and sits it down again) I say sister—hic—Paxey, habn't you got some more—hic—ob dat medicine around here? I think it—hic—does my corns good.

*Sister P.* (gives him turpentine bottle) Here's some more, I think.

*Bones.* (drinking) Am it? it don't hab—hic—de same taste, any way.

*Sister P.* Don't it? Well I—hic—can't help that. But I guess we had better—hic—get that child baptized.

*Bones.* (suddenly jumps up) Oh, my—hic—stomach is out of order.

(runs off R. 1 E.)

*Sister P.* I wonder what in—hic—de name ob skience eber took dat man off—hic—so suddenly? I wanted to hab—hic—dat child baptized before he went.

*Jim.* Why, you old fool, mammy, his—hic—legs took him off so suddenly.

*Sister P.* O, yes, I know dat, but what prompted his legs to take him off am a mystery to me—O, I hab made a mistake an' gib de preacher turpentine instead ob my rheumatic medicine. But I wish he had baptized dat child before he went.



*Jim.* Yes, mammy, but you see, circumstances won't permit, they wouldn't in his case, any way, not when he had swallowed a pint ob turpentine. (*aside*) I'll surprise mammy, when she lays down to take her evening nap, I'll get the baby and baptize it while she am asleep.

*Sister P.* You Jim, go an' see after dat child.

(*stagger and falls on front of stage—sleeps.*)

*Jim.* Dat am a curious place dat mammy hab picked on to take her nap.

*Sister P.* (*in her sleep*) Oh, my stomach's—hic—out of order.

*Jim.* Yes, dat am what dat preacher said. I guess a dose out ob dat bottle dat she gib de preacher might ease her. (*gets the bottle and stands over her as if to pour it in her face*) O, mammy don't you want a dose? It will relieve you, I know. Well now, I don't think it would be any harm to gib her a dose any way, I believe it would do her good, she gib it to the preacher, an' she always said, "to do to others as you would hab 'em do to you," an' when she gib de preacher a dose ob dis turpentine, I—hic—don't think it would be any harm to gib her a dose according to her own rule. (*gets bottle and stands over her again*) O, mammy, you had better—hic—hab a dose, it will do you good.

*Sister P.* (*on floor unable to move*) Not any—hic—more, I thank you.

*Jim.* Well, mammy, if you won't hab any, you can go to sleep, I don't care. (*aside*) I'll let mammy get good and sound asleep, an' den I'll—hic—baptizedat little brudder ob mine. I guess mammy am sound enough asleep to proceed with dat baptizen. She said she wanted it dipped and de preacher said a pail ob water would almost do, an' I am goin' to beat de preacher, I am goin' to make it do. I guess I had better bring it in here an' save making a slop in de parlor. (*exit R.*)

*Enter Jim, R., with pail of water and large rag baby.*

*Jim.* Well, I hab got back—hic—but de baby am asleep, well, I don't care if it does wake it. Well, here goes. (*holds it up as if to dip it*) O, I neber heard mammy say what she wanted it—hic—called, but neber mind I'll call it somethin'. Now let me see—hic—General George-Washington-Grant-Davis-Lincoln-Ulyssus-Hayes-Tilden-Paxy. I reckon dat will be name enough, if it ain't, mammy can call it ober again. Well here goes. (*holds it up by the feet, and dip for each name, the first dip the baby squeaks, but he hits it on the floor and quiets it, at the last dip leaves it sticking in pail, head downward*) Now it can soak awhile, an' if mammy don't—hic—think that it am done good enough—hic—she can hab it done ober again.

*Sister P.* (*waking*) Whare am dat child?

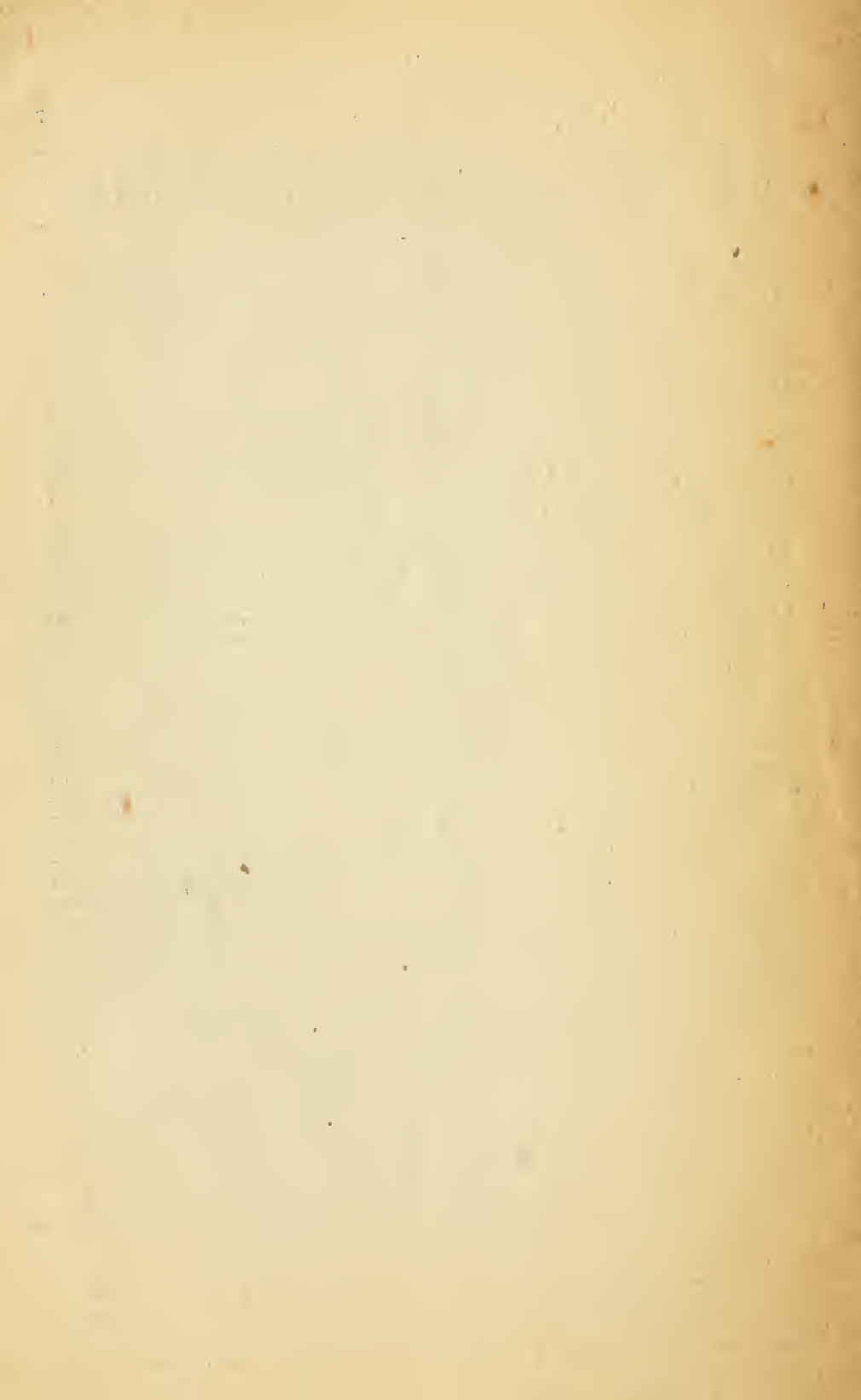
*Jim.* (*pointing to child*) Dare it am. I've been baptizen' it, an' I left it there to soak.

*Sister P.* (*sees baby*) Git out ob dis in about three seconds.

(*seizes the broom and runs after Jim, who takes the baby as he runs.*)

*Jim.* Come on little brudder. (*Sister Paxey pursues Jim around stage as*

CURTAIN.



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